

go back to the Han period, and that it was this western fable which, under the influence of Taoist wonder-workers, was transferred in China to the Eastern Sea. But a fundamental error underlies this argument. Ma Tuan-lin, who, by the way, ought never to be quoted as a source except for Sung times, expressly mentions his source, 杜還 Tu Huan's 行經記 *Hsing-ching chi*, which, as a matter of fact, he copied second-hand from the *T'ung-tien*, and Tu Huan brought back his information from Mussulman countries in 762. So here again a connection between the western fable and the Chinese texts is hard to ascertain.

Another famous Chinese text speaks of a « Kingdom of Women » to the north-east of China; it is the pretended report of the monk 慧深 Hui-shên on the country of Fu-sang, in which, from DE GUIGNES to D'HERVEY DE SAINT-DENYS, LELAND and VINING, so many scholars have seen America, and SCHLEGEL the island of Sakhalin. Hui-shên came back to the region of the Yang-tzü in 499, pretending to have travelled to Fu-sang, more than 20,000 *li* to the east of the north-easternmost country known to the Chinese. The whole report is fictitious, although it contains some characteristic features of the Korean states; but it has a folklore interest. It has been preserved in the *Liang shu* (54, 12-13), whence it has passed into the *Nan shih* (79, 3-4). At the end of the notice on Fu-sang itself, there is the following description of the « Kingdom of Women » (cf. SCHLEGEL, in *TP*, III, 495-496) : « Hui-shên also said : 'More than one thousand *li* east of Fu-sang, there is the Kingdom of Women (Nü-kuo). They are beautifully shaped, and of a pure white colour. Their body is hairy, and the hair of their heads is so long that it trails on the ground. On the second or third moon, they eagerly enter into the water, and become pregnant, and give birth to children in the sixth or seventh moon. [These] women have no breasts on the chest, but, at the nape of the neck (項 *hsiang*; the *Nan shih* gives 頂 *ting*, « top of the head »; on this common corruption, cf. above, p. 682), hair grows on white stems; in these hairs there is a juice with which they suckle their children. [The children] can walk when they are one hundred days [old]; they become adult at three or four years. When they see people, they run away in fright, and are particularly afraid of men. They eat 鹹草 *hsien-ts'ao* (lit. « salt-herb »; LAUFER, 208, says « genus *Salsola* »; according to TARANZANO, *Angelica Kiusiana*, Max.), like (如 *ju*; perhaps here = « or », « and ») birds and beasts; the leaf of the *hsien-ts'ao* resembles 邪蒿 *hsieh-hao* (*Artemisia japonica*, according to SCHLEGEL [*TP*, III, 496], but *Seseli libanostis*, Koch., according to TARANZANO. The character 芬 *hsiang* given in the text by SCHLEGEL, which he translates « fragrant », can be but an arbitrary change due to the authors of the *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, since it is given in no ancient text), but it has a fragrant scent, and the savour is salt.

When translating this same text from Ma Tuan-lin, D'HERVEY DE SAINT-DENYS (*Ethnographie..., Orientaux*, 404) quite seriously adduced an ironical remark of BRETSCHNEIDER (*Chinese Recorder*, III [Oct. 1870]) according to which, if Hui-shên's calculation of distance was correct, the « Kingdom of Women » where « salt-herb » was eaten ought to have been near the Great Salt Lake, so that Hui-shên's « Kingdom of Women » would have been like a prefiguration of the polygamist Mormons ! But SCHLEGEL's rationalistic explanation of this « Kingdom of Women » as a colony of seals, or VINING's (*An Inglorious Columbus*, 493-514) as groups of Hapale monkeys of Central America, fare no better. The whole account is fantastic. We may suppose, however, that, in the late Japanese legend, the pregnancy due to a bath may be derived from the all too famous boast of the fake traveller Hui-shên.